

are currently being illegally detained in violation of their constitutional rights.

President Lukashenka must make good on his promise to hold free parliamentary elections in 2000 and presidential elections in 2001. Please join me in supporting this resolution.

H.R. 3116, THE FAIR COMPETITION IN FOREIGN COMMERCE ACT

HON. JIM KOLBE

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 16, 1999

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, for decades the United States has carried the standard in promoting democracy, market liberalization, and economic development abroad. To further those goals, we have spent literally billions of dollars in developing countries. And we have made progress. Nations have made economic progress over the past few decades and democracy is taking root in some of the rockiest soil in the globe. Thanks to the creation of the World Trade Organization a few years ago, the vast majority of international trade is now governed by clear and transparent rules.

But, as the Asian financial crisis and the theft of billions of dollars of IMF money in Russia shows, we still have a long way to go. Too many places in the world continue to be held in the grip of corruption and cronyism. The obvious impact of these two evils are the loss of untold millions, even billions, of dollars. But the corrosive effects of corruption and cronyism are worse; they are all too often hidden and ignored.

Government corruption undermines the rule of law—the very cornerstone of democracy. Government corruption undermines economic development, squandering billions of dollars of investment capital on enrichment of the few rather than the benefit of many. Government corruption undermines the ability of U.S. business to compete freely and fairly for foreign government contracts, costing U.S. corporations millions of dollars in lost sales. Government corruption undermines the integrity of public service and erodes the confidence of the public in their own government. Most important, government corruption steals hope—the hope for a better future that all citizens of the world have a right to expect. If nurturing democracy and expanding economic opportunity continue to be a goal of this country, then eliminating corruption and cronyism in government procurement must also be a priority. That is why I am proud to join with my colleague, ROBERT MATSUI in introducing H.R. 3116, the Fair Competition in Foreign Commerce Act. This legislation builds upon the excellent work of the Organization on Economic Development and Cooperation which set the international standard with its Agreement on Bribery and Corruption. The agreement makes it a crime to offer, promise or give a bribe to a foreign public official in order to obtain or retain international business deals. Sadly, there are today only thirty-four signatory countries to this agreement.

H.R. 3116 complements the work of the OECD, particularly that of the Development

Assistance Committee Recommendation on Anti-Corruption Proposals for Aid-Funded Procurement, approaches the problem of corruption in international government Procurement through U.S. foreign aid and multilateral financial institutions. It is not a club or a blunt instrument, but its says in no uncertain terms that the United States will not continue to underwrite corrupt practices in other countries.

Our bill requires the Secretary of the Treasury to develop a plan to promote international government procurement reforms using U.S. participation in international as the tool. It prohibits U.S. non-humanitarian foreign assistance to nations that have not demonstrated significant progress towards institutionalizing open and transparent government procurement practices.

We want to assist the administration's efforts to promote government procurement transparency, whether through the World Trade Organization or the Free Trade Area of the Americas. But we also want to ensure that transparency in government procurement doesn't take a back seat—that is why we require the administration and other nations to focus on institutionalizing open and transparent international government procurement practices.

The key to the legislation is building institutions in countries which promote and protect transparency in government procurement activities. We want nations to develop the institutional capacity needed to properly monitor international government procurement contracts. Where nations lack such capacity, we encourage the use of third-party procurement monitoring to ensure openness and transparency in the process. Third-party procurement monitoring is a process where an uninvolved third-party is hired to monitor every stage of the procurement process. The procedure has been used successfully in South America and Africa to fight corruption in international government procurement. Third-party procurement monitors have the expertise needed to ensure that a project is competitively bid and effectively executed. In turn, this expertise gets passed on to the host governments, which further institutionalizes open procurement practices. The goal should be a process free from cronyism and corruption. This legislation will help us accomplish that goal.

RECOGNIZING THE WORK OF THE AIR LAND EMERGENCY RE- SOURCE TEAM

HON. SAM JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 16, 1999

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the Congress' attention seven young men and the members of the Joseph Rankin family who sacrificed time and effort to serve the people of Russia from July 10–August 25, 1999, by remodeling an orphanage in Moscow to improve living conditions. In addition to the joy they received from investing in the lives of others, this cross-cultural experience gave these individuals a

greater appreciation for the benefits and privileges we enjoy in America. These individuals are to be commended for their willingness to put the needs of others before their own.

Daniel Buhler, MI; Michael Hadden, GA; Jesse Long, WA; Timothy Moye, GA; Joseph Rankin, MI; Joyce Rankin, MI; Benjamin Rankin, MI; Daniel Rankin, MI; Joseph Rankin, MI; Justin Tanner, MI; Jefferson Turner, GA; Neil Waters, VA.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM MISSES IMPORTANT TARGET

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 16, 1999

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member highly commends to his colleagues this editorial I submit from the November 1, 1999, Norfolk Daily News regarding campaign finance reform. The editorial rightly notes that campaign finance reform must address the use of union dues (regardless of the union member's wishes) for political contributions.

[From the Daily News, Nov. 1, 1999]

REFORM MISSES IMPORTANT TARGET

CAMPAIGN FOR NEW RESTRICTIONS FAILS TO PUT
FOCUS ON MAJOR SOURCE OF PROBLEMS

At the same time as the McCain-Feingold proposal aimed at changing rules of campaign financing was being defeated in the U.S. Senate, a major endorsement aimed at influencing the 2000 election results was taking place. Its unsurprising results bear on the issue, inaccurately described as "reform," since that term implies beneficial change, not cosmetic change.

McCain-Feingold's aim was to reduce the "soft money" contributions by which unlimited amounts may be given to political parties—not individual candidates—for advancing their views on major issues of the day. It is a contrast to the \$1,000 individual contribution limits, never adjusted for inflation, which can be provided directly to candidates.

Bearing on this issue is the way in which some organizations, notably the AFL-CIO, can support their favored candidates with endorsements, publicity and in-house politicking with little regard for financing limitations.

The recent AFL-CIO endorsement of Vice President Al Gore's bid for the Democratic nomination was not unanimous, and it lacked important initial support from two of the major affiliates, the Teamsters Union and the United Auto Workers. They are likely to check in later. But that endorsement kicked into gear a \$40 million union mobilization for the primaries and the general election. It is "soft money" but vital support—in part provided in violation of the rights of that apparent minority of union members which may want Bill Bradley as the nominee, or as an extreme example, members who might even choose a Republican.

The unions have every right to back whatever candidates they choose. They do not have the right, however, to spend mandatory dues money that was supposed to have been allocated to collective bargaining and the more restricted cause of improving the status of union workers.

Being forced, through mandatory fees, to support candidates and causes with which one disagrees is a violation of a fundamental